

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 are pending. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to clarify the language of the claim, as discussed during the September 20, 2005 personal interview.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner Vu at the interview held September 20 are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute the record of the interview.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (d) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (e) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the personal interview and the Office Action. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Miida (U.S. Patent No. 6,504,194). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action at page 4 indicates that the feature "accumulating a predetermined amount of charges of the given conductivity type in the accumulation region" will not be given patentable weight because the feature is considered an operational limitation. Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the control circuit is configured to perform the above-noted

feature. Accordingly, the above-noted feature must be given patentable weight because the control circuit is structurally configured to perform the above-noted feature.

As discussed during the personal interview, independent claim 1 recites accumulating a predetermined amount of the charges of the given conductivity type, which is not disclosed in Miida. The Examiner indicated that the context in which the term "predetermined amount" is being used was vague. In response, independent claim 1 has been amended to recite accumulating a predetermined amount of the charges of the given conductivity type during pre-charging regardless of an amount of the charges of the given conductivity type before pre-charging in the accumulation region.

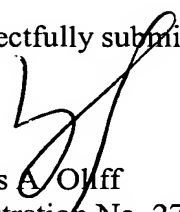
Miida does not disclose or suggest the above-noted feature of claim 1. Miida instead at Fig. 9 and at col. 11, lines 7-10 discloses that charges remaining at the carrier pocket and well regions are exhausted by an initializing operation. Specifically, the remaining charges prior to initializing operation at not a predetermined amount, but varies based on the previous operation. According to Miida, the remaining charges from the previous operation are exhausted by the initializing operation. Nowhere, does Miida disclose or suggest accumulating a predetermined amount of the charges of the given conductivity type during pre-charging regardless of an amount of the charges of the given conductivity type before pre-charging in the accumulation region.

Therefore, independent claim 1 defines patentable subject matter. Claims 2-5 depend on independent claim 1, and, therefore, also define patentable subject matter as well as for the other features they recite. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-5 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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